contracted for import from Australia and Canada as on 14.2.1997 as per details given below :

Country	Qty. (in lakh tonnes)	rate in US $ PMT
Australia	10.00	148.00 (FOB)
	3.25	156.00 (FOB)
Canada	2.50	152.50 (FOB)

(b) Government decided to import upto 2 million tonnes of wheat in order to augment domestic availability in view of the decline in production of wheat during 1995-96 by 3.1 million tonnes and the fall in procurement by 4.1 million tonnes during 1996-97. The stock of wheat as on 1.2.1997 in the Central Pool is estimated at 50.80 lakh tonnes (provisional).

(c) The quality specifications of the imported wheat as per the contract are comparable with the uniform specifications prescribed for procurement of indigenous wheat for Central Pool under Price Support Operations.

(d) The imported wheat, alongwith indigenous wheat will form part of the Central Pool and issued under all the schemes of the Government.

Safai Karamcharis

2586. SHRI MANGAL RAM PREMI : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the maltreatment being meted out to the Safai Karamcharis in the country;

(b) if so the number of complaints received by the Union Government and the State Government in this regard; and

(c) the action taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and consolidated report will be laid on the Table of the House.

Port Facilities for Imported Wheat

2587. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether port facility is not adequate enough for the handling of imported wheat;

(b) whether the Governement propose to curtail the import of wheat in view of port problems;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Increase in Prices of Sugar

2588. SHRI I.D. SWAMI : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether due to the pressure from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund the Government have been compelled to increase the price of levy sugar from February 10, 1997 and the rise in prices of wheat and rice is on the anvil; and

(b) if so, the reasons for succumbing the pressure of the World Bank and the International Monettary Fund?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Do not arise.

Afforestation

2589. SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the monetary allocation made for afforestation during the Eighth Five Year Plan;

(b) whether the amount allocation was fully utilised during the period;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the allocation has been adequately increased in the Ninth Five Year Plan; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

National Watershed Development Project

2590. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a number of schemes under the National Watershed Development Project have been taken up in the State of Orissa;

(b) if so, the names of schemes and the amount allotted for each of the schemes; and

(c) the progress achieved after implementation of each of the schemes so far?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b) A Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA), which is a multi- component project, is under implementation in the State of Orissa since 1990-91. Under this project 258 micro-watersheds have been taken up in as many blocks covering an area of 388875 hectares with an estimated cost of Rs. 105.69 crores.

An amount of Rs. 105.69 crores has been allocated under this project to the State of Orissa for the period from 1990-91 to 1996-97.

(c) An amount of Rs. 75.07 crores has been released to the State of Orissa so far out of which an amount of Rs. 62.21 crores has been utilised upto December. 1996.

Agitation by Vishwa Hindu Parishad

2591. SHRI MUKHTAR ANIS : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Vishwa Hindu Parishad has threatened to launch an agitation in Mach, 1997 to take over the Shahi Idgah in Mathura and Gyan Vapi Masjid in Varanasi;

(b) whether the cases of both these places of worship have been judicially settled in the past and the places are covered by the places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991;

(c) if so, the view taken by the Government about the legality of such agitation; and

(d) the preventive measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) According to the information received from the Government of Uttar Pradesh, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has not formally announced any agitational programmes during March, 1997 for taking over forcibly the Shahi Idgah in Mathura and Gyan Vapi Masjid in Varanasi. However, the VHP has announced "Jalabhishek" programme at Kashi Vishwa Nath Temple, Varanasi on March 7, 1997 and "Sant Yatra" in Braj Prant, Uttar Pradesh during March, 10-16, 1997 on the issue of Krishna Janma Bhoomi Temple at Mathura.

(b) Kashi Vishwa Nath Temple-Gyan Vapi Masjid, Varanasi and Krishna Janma Bhoomi-Shahi Idgah Masjid, Mathura Shrines are covered by the provisions of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991. Some cases relating to these shrines are reported to be pending in courts.

(c) and (d) Public Order is a State subject as per the provisions of the Constitution of India. However, the Central Government has advised the State Government of U.p to take necessary steps to ensure safety of the shrines and to maintain peace and communal harmony.

Incident of Crimes in Tripura

2592. DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of cases of killing, robbery, theft, molestation and rape taken place in Tripura during the last six months; and

(b) the steps proposed to be taken to improve the law and order situation in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) and (b) Information is being collected from the State Government of Tripura and will be laid on the Table of the House after if is received.

Demand of Fertilizers

2593. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the requirement of phosphatic and nitrogenous chemical fertilizers as intimated to the Government by the different States for the current 'Rabi' crops;

(b) whether the Government is able to meet the requirements of the States; and

(c) if so, give the details of the requirements and the proposed supply of the fertilizers to each State/ Union Territory?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) to (c) Urea is the only fertilizer which is under statutory price control and for which allocations are made. All other fertilizers stand decontrolled and its demand and supply is decided by the market forces. A statement indicating the assessed requirementt of urea for Rabi 1996-97 season and potential requirement of other decontrolled fertilizers (as reported by the State Government) is Annexed. The entire assessed requirement of urea will be met except in the case of State Governments/Union Territories who do not require during the season. The availability of urea in the country up to 31.1.1997 is reported to be satisfactory.